

ST. PAUL, MN, - Ramsey County's Union Depot renovation project will receive another \$40 million from the U.S. Department of Transportation, said Congresswoman Betty McCollum. The DOT will finalize the grant awards this week, McCollum said. The grants are being given to high speed rail projects across the U.S.

A \$148,753,916 construction contract with M.A. Mortenson Construction was approved by the Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority in September. The renovation project is expected to be completed at the end of 2012.

"The Depot project is the centerpiece of Ramsey County's efforts to bring new economic vitality to downtown St. Paul and the East Metro region," said Commissioner Jim McDonough, chair of the Regional Rail Authority. "The related economic development will create jobs, short term and long term. We are putting people to work now."

The Union Depot project will consolidate several existing transportation services into one intermodal facility serving St. Paul, Ramsey County and the Upper Midwest. Transit providers at the Depot will include Amtrak, whose Empire Builder will move its Twin Cities station stop from its current location in the Midway area of Saint Paul to Union Depot. Greyhound and Jefferson Lines intercity bus companies have expressed their intent to relocate as well. Several local bus routes operated by Metro Transit and other regional providers will stop at Union Depot, allowing for seamless intermodal connections with intercity bus and rail. The facility is also being rebuilt to better serve pedestrian and bicycle traffic. In 2014, the Central Corridor light rail line will open with its St. Paul terminus immediately in front of the Depot, providing light rail connections from downtown St. Paul to the University of Minnesota and Minneapolis.

In addition to these near-term services, the project will be designed to accommodate future intercity, commuter, and high speed rail services. Of particular importance is the fact that the Union Depot project will serve as a future terminus of the Chicago-Milwaukee-St. Paul line of the Midwest High Speed Rail network.

Development will include new infill construction as well as adaptive reuse of existing buildings. It will yield direct economic benefits while contributing to a more sustainable, low-carbon urban form. It reflects Ramsey County's ongoing commitment to green construction.

The project is being funded through a combination of county, state and federal funds, including the previously awarded \$50 million from SAFETEA-LU and \$35 million in TIGER stimulus funds.